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NEWS

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Secretary Norton Says State and Local Governments to Get \$224 Million under Federal Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program

WASHINGTON-Secretary of the Interior Gale A. Norton today announced the distribution of more than \$224 million to county governments whose jurisdictions contain tax-exempt federal lands. Norton noted that this year's distribution payments under the Payment In Lieu of Taxes Act, compensates nearly 1,900 local governments for tax revenue lost because of the federal land in their jurisdiction.

"These important dollars help states offset the loss of tax revenues to counties that contain federal lands," Norton said. "We recognize the impact of federal land management on local communities and this money will help pay for essential services such as firefighting, search-and-rescue operations and a host of other badly needed on-the-ground services."

This year's PILT total of \$224,301,697 represents an increase of \$6.1 million more than Fiscal Year 2003. Including this year's payments, the Interior Department has distributed more than \$3.4 billion to local governments since the program began in 1977. The President's FY 2005 budget includes \$226 million, the largest ever request made by a President. The President's request represents an increase of nearly 70 percent more than the funding levels provided five years ago, in FY 2000.

The Interior Department collects revenues of \$6 to \$11 billion annually from commercial activities on federal lands, such as oil and gas leasing, livestock grazing, and timber harvesting. A significant portion of these revenues are deposited in the general fund of the U.S. Treasury which in turn pay for a broad array of federal activities, including payments to counties.

For the third year in a row, Secretary Norton is sending PILT checks three months earlier than in the past. "The accelerated payment schedule makes it easier for state and local governments to budget for the upcoming fiscal year, which begins July 1 for many jurisdictions," Norton said.

These federal payments to county governments may be used for any governmental purpose. PILT payments are computed and disbursed by the Interior Department on or before

September 30th of each year. They have been used to help improve local school, water, and road systems. Payment eligibility is reserved for local governments (usually counties) that provide services such as those related to public safety, environment, housing, social services, and transportation, and that contain nontaxable federal lands.

Payments under PILT are made for tax-exempt federal lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (all agencies of the Interior Department), the USDA Forest Service (part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture), and for federal water projects and some military installations. These payments are in addition to other federal revenues that the federal government transfers to the states.

All states except Rhode Island will receive PILT funding in 2004. The District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands also receive these funds. The states receiving the most under the program this year are New Mexico, Utah, and California.

PILT 2004 Payments by State

Alabama	\$409,035	New Jersey	\$77,295
Alaska	\$15,638,228	New Mexico	\$21,999,459
Arizona	\$18,698,143	New York	\$88,425
Arkansas	\$3,189,632	North Carolina	\$2,411,306
California	\$19,128,162	North Dakota	\$1,005,087
Colorado	\$17,600,933	Ohio	\$532,703
Connecticut	\$29,181	Oklahoma	\$1,500,526
Delaware	\$10,330	Oregon	\$6,245,153
Florida	\$2,886,819	Pennsylvania	\$461,048
Georgia	\$1,534,672	Rhode Island	\$0
Hawaii	\$186,340	South Carolina	\$249,918
Idaho	\$15,306,478	South Dakota	\$2,506,524
Illinois	\$625,111	Tennessee	\$1,390,696
Indiana	\$367,383	Texas	\$2,593,311
Iowa	\$255,559	Utah	\$19,136,869
Kansas	\$638,822	Vermont	\$522,377
Kentucky	\$1,595,515	Washington	\$5,879,878
Louisiana	\$295,544	West Virginia	\$1,689,467
Maine	\$203,568	Wisconsin	\$1,015,808
Maryland	\$85,384	Wyoming	\$14,627,836
Massachusetts	\$63,610	District of Columbia	\$18,084
Michigan	\$2,553,298	Guam	\$1,885
Minnesota	\$1,628,214	Puerto Rico	\$36,403
Mississippi	\$923,096	Virgin Islands	\$39,514
Missouri	\$2,157,494		

Montana	\$16,681,936	Total	\$224,301,697
Nebraska	\$654,262		
Nevada	\$13,495,376		
New Hampshire	\$998,447		

For more information on the PILT program visit:<http://www.blm.gov/pilt>

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